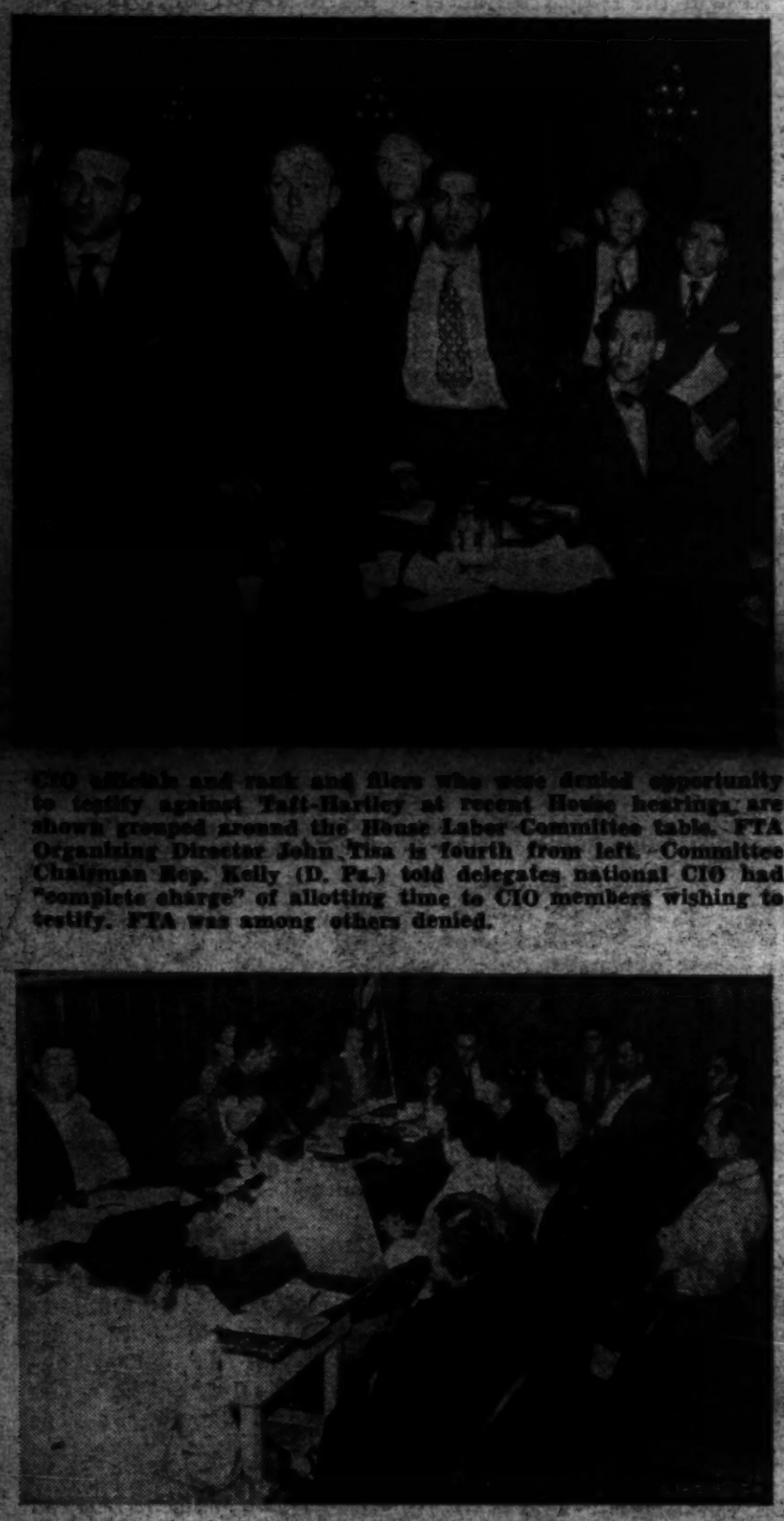
FTA NEWS

FOOD, TOBACCO, AGRICULTURAL AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA—CIO

Vol. VIII, No. 4 APRIL, 1949 [illegible] T.U.S., Inc. Price Five Cents



CIO officials and rank and filers who were denied opportunity to testify against Taft-Hartley at recent House hearings are shown grouped around the House Labor Committee table. FTA Organizing Director John Tisa is fourth from left. Committee Chairman Rep. Kelly (D. Pa.) told delegates national CIO had "complete charge" of allotting time to CIO members wishing to testify. FTA was among others denied.

Here's a part of the Local 78 Conference at work in the Los Angeles CIO building. Plans were laid to concentrate on organizing work, especially in the Fresno and Brentwood areas. A general tightening up on the work of the union was also mapped out.

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FTA CAMPAIGN FORCES CONTRACT FROM LIBBY

Union solidarity against a company that threatened the life of all unions paid off this week when the second largest cannery in the world signed a new contract with FTA Local 194 in Blue Island, Ill.

The company was Libby, McNeill & Libby, which only a few weeks ago was telling the world in loud tones that it would never, no never, sign a contract with an FTA union.

Libby's had added a new twist to the now-familiar refusal to bargain with a union whose officers don't go for Taft-Hartley. Not only did they refuse to sign a new contract, but they went to the length of refusing to honor their own signature on a previously negotiated agreement.

This repudiation of the company's own signed pledge shocked thousands of trade union members throughout the country, and they poured letters of protest into Daniel W. Creedon, top dog in Libby's, telling him that workers and their wives couldn't think favorably of canned goods made by such a company.

The campaign was carried to all the unions in the U. S., chiefly by means of a pamphlet "Look to Libby's For a Doublecross" that told the story in detail. The re[illegible] and individual members forced the huge con[illegible]

Events leading up to the campaign included the arbitrary firing of two chief shop stewards, deliberate discrimination against Negro workers, down-grading and the like. Red-baiting figured prominently in the anti-FTA propaganda of the company—but it didn't work.

The workers stuck by their union and now they have a new contract, considered one of the best in the cannery industry.

Johnny Gallecher, president of Local 194, put it this way when he told FTA News about the victory.

"This victory shows once again that the unions can force the most stubborn employers to act in a reasonable manner, provided they stick together. The support that FTA 194 received from the FTA national office, from FTA locals and from the rest of the labor movement made it possible for us to win.

"Our members realize that they owe a debt of gratitude to the entire labor movement, and they also know that the labor movement has been strengthened through their victory. Libby's refusal to honor the original agreement was an experiment that could have spread like wildfire throught industry—if it had succeeded in Blue Island.

"We want to say thanks to all the brothers and sisters in every union who helped us defeat this drive against our union and against all unions."

FTA AND AFL CONFERENCE HELD ON CIGAR PROBLEMS

What is believed to be the first joint meeting of a CIO and an AFL international union called to discuss common problems was assembling in Philadelphia under FTA auspices as FTA News went to press.

The conference, called by FTA President Donald Henderson, will take up problems of workers in the cigar industry throughout the nation, regardless of what union they belong to or whether they belong to any.

AFL leaders in attendance on FTA's invitation will include Mario Azpeitia of the AFL Cigarmakers Union. President Azpeitia was recently elected head of his union when a rank and file ticket was put into office.

"This conference was proposed at the National FTA convention and will discuss all basic problems facing us in this industry in our organized plants, as well as to discuss the decisions of the National convention to carry on a concentrated organizing drive among the unorganized cigar workers," Henderson said.

Also commenting on the conference, FTA Vice-President Armando Ramirez said: "The main purpose of the meeting is to organize the unorganized shops in order to protect and increase the benefits won in those that bargain with our union.

"The job can be done—in fact has to be done. Organized cigar workers cannot hope to hold their gains while they allow allow sands of their brother and sister cigar makers to remain unorganized."

The meeting was scheduled for the Stephen Girard Hotel for April 23-24, with some 200 or more delegates expected.

Score on Congress

AT THE HALF-WAY MARK

by Elizabeth Sasuly

The 81st Congress is bogged down at the half-way mark—as far as the bills that labor wants are concerned.

To listen to National Democratic Committee Chairman Howard McGrath, you might think differently — McGrath boasts that Congress has passed 345 bills in the House and 38 through both House and Senate—but the facts tell a different story.

Here are some of the bills McGrath boasts of passing: a bill depriving longshoremen of overtime due them under the wage-hour act; a $4,000,000 cut in the employment service funds, money urgently needed to help the unemployed; a rent control law praised both by President Truman and the head of the landlord's lobby; a $15 billion appropriation for the armed forces, and over $5 billion for the Marshall plan.

T-H Repeal?

Do you see civil rights or Taft-Hartley repeal on the list? A $1.00 or even a 75c minimum wage bill? Elimination of wage hour discriminations against food, tobacco and cotton processing workers? Housing? Health?

Not one of these things made McGrath's list. Of course, he said, there were "exceptions," and "reasons."

There certainly were. Those "exceptions" were labor's program.

We have a chance of winning our program, but if we do it will be because we forced Congress to act, not because of the "victories" that McGrath lists like the above.

The record has been particularly poor on civil rights. Walter White, who is president of the Association for Advancement of Colored People, told McGrath that the Democrats had sold out the Negro people. White's bitterness was provoked by the tactics Democrats used in the Senate to dodge a fight over the filibusters.

During the debate, Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois, a northern Democrat who was called a great friend of labor in the campaign, made a speech so hard to distinguish from a Dixiecrat oration that Senator Russell of Georgia said: "I don't think he (Douglas) and I are so far apart. . . . We might have some differences in the approach, but in our basic feelings we are the same."

Around the Corner

A leadership such as the Administration has shown so far does not give much promise of stopping bills which even now are threatening to destroy civil rights altogether—unless it is pushed into action.

Such bills are ready—a new and even tougher Mundt-Nixon bill, or the new Wood bill which can put anyone in jail on the sayso of the Attorney-General. (See page 7.)

Why this failure of Congress to perform on the many promises made—and believed—during the campaign last fall? Why this apparent collapse on the part of men who were glad to solicit and accept labor's election support?

One very good key was given in debate a couple of weeks ago by Rep. Vito Marcantonio (ALP, N. Y.), the man who votes and fights consistently for labor on every issue. Said he:

"I pity some of my liberal friends who cry over the defeats the people have sustained in this House. They say, how can this happen after the people spoke so loudly and bravely in the elections?

Can't Have Both

"The answer is simple. It is found in the imperialist foreign policy these alleged liberals support. Yes, the mandate of the people is being negated here because you are giving your support to the foreign policy of cold war, Truman doctrine, ECA and Atlantic pact. You support imperialism abroad and you expect progress at home. You can't have both."

And let us add: unless the people take their demands for civil rights, for T-H repeal, for economic justice, for public welfare—directly to the Congressmen, the record of the 81st Congress will go on in the second half as it has through the first.

They ought to change the name and call them not newspapers but adpapers . . . last year, official figures show, newspapers were 60 percent advertising and only 40 percent news. 1941 figure was the other way around. Also last year the "adpapers" took in their highest total of ad revenue—$389,261,000. Advertising is deductible as a business expense, hence is tax free. Since revenue has to be raised, YOU pay most of the freight for advertising.

* * *

The N. Y. Journal of Commerce is nothing if not frank. Said a recent headline: "Delay In Taft Act Repeal May Stymie Union Drive For 4th Round Pay Rises." That's why bosses pay 15c a copy daily for the Journal. It gives 'em straight dope.

* * *

Even Robert N. Denham, general counsel for the Taft-Hartley NLRB, has his moments of honesty. He told a Senate hearing the other day: "I had some very close relations with some of the Wall St. brokerage houses and with some of the bond houses. . . . In 1937 I was manager of one of the stock exchange houses."

* * *

This is the kind of news that really helps you forget your troubles. According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, prices dropped 1.4 percent in New York and Pittsburgh and 4.1 percent in Philadelphia in February. They were still 32 percent above 1946 and 67 percent above 1935-39.

* * *

AFL firefighters in Oregon and Wyoming have just won the 72 hour week. Before the law was passed, they could be (and were) worked up to as high as 144 hours. The AFL Intl. Assn. of Firefighters rightly takes pride in this achievement.

* * *

Ex-Congressman Fred Hartley, co-sponsor of that act, is back in Washington. He's lobbyist for a thing called the Tool Owners Union. N. Y. State recently refused it a charter, saying it was "Fascist in form." Hartley's also president of TOU.

* * *

The man who wrote the law — Gerard Reilly, formerly of the old NLRB—has just been revealed as lobbyist of General Electric and the Printing Industry of America. Reilly's combined income is said to be around $100,000 a year. Looks like crime does pay, after all.

* * *

All newspapers use little bits called "fillers" to plug up small empty spaces in the paper. A labor paper recently had a dandy at the bottom of a story on a strike in which there'd been some scabbing. It read: "There are more than 2,000 species of snakes in the world."

* * *

Beer and whisky barrels are part of Marshall Plan shipments to Europe, a Senator discloses. The same Senator also found that the Marshall Plan was shipping 600,000 pounds of cheese at $1.18 a pound. Nearly $32,000 has been given to Newsweek, anti-union big business magazine, for shipments to "aid Europe." Seems we're going to educate 'em, stuff 'em and befuddle 'em, no matter what the cost.

Congress Hears Bosses on T-H; Refuses Time to Hear Unions

Congress has had plenty of time to listen to the bosses on the subject of the Taft-Hartley law and why we should keep it — but they haven't had time enough to listen to FTA or a dozen other CIO unions.

Time to testify was denied FTA early this month when the union asked for a chance to reply to lies and slanders told on the witness stand by Hank Strobel, former deputy sheriff and strikebreaker for the grower-shippers in the lettuce packing strike of 1936.

The House Labor Subcommittee which refused to hear FTA and other CIO unions, threw the blame on the national CIO office, which had arbitrarily allotted the time to certain union leaders and denied it to others.

Subcommittee chairman Augustine Kelly (D., Pa.) put it this way to FTA and other union leaders when he said bluntly:

"Let me tell you something. Did you ask for time through national CIO? They had complete control. Don't blame us. Take your troubles to CIO."

Even Albert J. Fitzgerald, president of the CIO's third largest union—the United Electrical Workers—and a national vice-president of CIO, was denied the right to speak, though his union had been the target of violent diatribes from the witness stand by the President of General Electric.

FTA's statement, which was filed with the subcommittee by Director of Organization John Tisa, quoted CIO President Murray's statement that: "This (the Taft-Hartley law) is the first step toward the establishment of fascism in the United States" as its text.

The statement then proceeded to analyze the the effect of the law on two FTA collective bargaining situations—the R. J. Reynolds Co. in Winston-Salem, where the company wilfully tore up a contract of four years standing, and the strike of FTA asparagus workers in California. Tisa also answered in detail the false accusations made by Strobel against the union.

Meantime, repeal of the Taft-Hartley law has still not been accomplished though the 81st Congress has been in session since January 3.

Instead, a succession of coalition moves by poltax Democrats and northern Republican has been made in an open attempt to substitute a new version of Taft-Hartley by another name for the old.

Senator Taft has boldly proclaimed his intention of tacking a few minimum changes on the old law and Rep. Wood, Florida Democrat and chairman of the unAmerican Committee, has come forward with a proposal even more anti-union than the act of 1947.

Leadership from Administration forces pledged at election time to outright repeal has been lacking. No White House pressure has been put on Congress for the quick action promised in November, and as FTA News went to press the House was just beginning to consider the Thomas-Lesinski repeal bill, which CIO is backing.

FTA NEWS

Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied Workers Union of America — CIO

Published monthly by the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied Workers Union of America, CIO, at 17 Murray St., New York 7, N. Y.

Editorial Office: 20th and Race Streets, Philadelphia, Pa.

Donald Henderson .....General President
Armando Valdes .....General Secretary-Treasurer
Vice Presidents .....Lewis Bentzley, Robert Lathan,
Armando Ramirez — Organizing Director: John Tisa
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Subscription: $1 a year to non-members

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Vol. IX APRIL, 1949 No. 4

FTA 82 Aids United CIO-AFL Action on Jobless

Approximately 200 unemployed people met in Modesto, Calif., to set up an executive committee to handle the problems of the unemployed of Stanislaus County.

The meeting was called by a temporary committee set up at a special meeting held by FTA Local 82 last week. The meeting heard Mr. Frank M. Goodban, manager of the local Employment Office, speak on the number of unemployed in the county which he estimated at 10,000, and on the services offered by the Department to them. Goodban offered full cooperation to the group and said the Department would be willing to furnish speakers to the organization at any time.

Al Green, president of the County AFL Central Labor Council, told the meeting that the AFL had been instrumental in getting the Modesto Chamber of Commerce to pass a resolution calling for the elimination of the Amendment to 57 (e) of the California Unemployment Insurance Act.

Green said:

"You can sit here and talk to Governor and the State legislature you won't get any action on 57 (e). He offered AFL co-operation on problems of the unemployed in the county.

Business Agent Lorena Ballard of Local 82 said FTA was in full accord with the program of organizing the unemployed. She said FTA has more than 1,000 signatures on petitions asking for the repeal of 57 (e) as amended. The petitions were to be presented to the Committee on finance and insurance in the state capital by a delegation from the local.

The executive committee of 15 people who volunteered will meet to make plans to help the people in the County who are in dire need and to make arrangements for further membership meetings.

How Reynolds Steals Workers' Compensation

(This article, written for FTA News by international Vice-President Robert Lathan, shows how the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. of Winston-Salem, N. C., is able to rob seasonal workers of their unemployment compensation by juggling loopholes in the state law. Reynolds, incidentally, makes a profit of $34,000,000 a year.)

The Unemployment Compensation act of North Carolina was passed for the purpose of assisting workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own. Some of the big tobacco companies have a program to destroy the unemployment compensation act by amending it to the point where workers cannot draw unemployment compensation.

The R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company with a net profit of over $34 million is using the act as amended, by which any company can deny any seasonal worker unemployment compensation by using the amendment to the act called the "seasonal exemptions."

"Seasonal exemptions" are provided in a clause stating that if a worker has not worked 36 weeks in a season, the company is exempt from the act by not paying into the fund.

The R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company is thus taking away $30,000 a year from the workers and at the same time saving the company approximately $2,500 a year. Yet the total amount in the North Carolina funds is approximately $155,000,000. The act was amended again this year in two ways to further save the company money on the tax.

It was amended again, raising the minimum benefits from $4.00 to $6.00 per week, from 16 to 20 weeks, and raising the besic credit period from $130 to $200. The danger in this proposal is this: 1,200 workers lost their unemployment commdemnation because they did not make $200. This amendment, over a period of two years, could disqualify at least 12,000 persons.

FTA shakes hands with AFL. President Mario Azpeitia of the AFL Cigarmakers Union (right) receives congratulations on election from FTA Secretary-Treasurer Armando Valdes. President Azpeitia accepted FTA's invitation to cigar industry conference called in Philadelphia April 23-24. This is believed to be first time in history two "competing" unions of AFL and CIO have met to discuss common problems, new organizing and wage drives.

Leaf Workers in Unemployed Talks

By Marie Jackson

Leaf house workers of FTA Region 2 recently held a conference in Wilson, North Carolina. There were representatives from three locals present; Local 10 in North Carolina and Virginia, Local 22 in North Carolina and Local 45 in Virginia.

Purpose of the conference was to discuss major problems of the workers, politically and economically—our main issue being unemployment.

Unemployment is growing rapidly in North Carolina and Virginia. The unemployed workers have begun to move on some issues. Recently a group met with the commissioners and the state legislature. In this meeting they presented a 12 point program. The three main points in the proposals were: a $25.00 minimum weekly benefit, extend the benefit period from 16 to 26 weeks and elimination of the "seasonal pursuit."

Knowing the stand that President Truman and his much desired 81st Democratic Congress is taking, it was proposed that we continue to put pressure on the President in regard to civil rights and complete repeal of the Taft-Hartley act plus reinstatement of the Wagner act.

Since the Legislature is not in session in Virginia, the workers have accepted the proposal that they secure all information on the Virginia unemployment law possible in order to familiarize with the issues to move on.

Renewal Wins 5c

Local 74 (now a part of the newly amalgamated Local 400, made up of Michigan affiliates of FTA) has just won a five cent across the board increase in renewing its contract with the Reid-Murdoch Co.

On the negotiating committee were President Leo G. La Croix, Earl Balch, Ivan Coolman, John Gerlach and FTA Regional Director Warren G. Horie.

88 Wins Raise

A five cent increase, plus upward adjustments for cost of living increases without a downward clause were won in the new contract negotiated by FTA Local 88, Newark, N. J.

A private group insurance plan provides the workers with more liberal benefits than those under the state scheme. Based on 66.66 percent of current weekly earnings, maximum benefit is $30 for 26 weeks beginning with the eighth day of sickness, and a minimum of $9.00, all at no additional cost to the workers.

638 Elects

Local 638, Lancaster, Pa., has elected three delegates to the state CIO convention meeting at the end of the month in Harrisburg.

Elected were: Miriam Cliff, president; Ada Hohman (Lorillard); Andrew Dotterman (Consolidated) and one to be designated by the Eshelman plant in York, Pa.

The local also sent delegates to the state capital to protest threatened passage of a "subversive activities" bill aimed at unions and to urge passage of improved unemployment compensation, a state FEPC and a housing program.

This is the scene in Local 75's hall at Houston, Tex., when the members voted unanimously to strike the Anderson, Clayton Co. —the world's largest cotton firm. Strike was won with a five cent across the board increase and other gains.

Local 75 Wins Strike At Anderson, Clayton

By LARRY LARSEN

Six hundred cotton compress workers, members of FTA Local 75 Houston, Tex., won a smashing victory against the world's largest compress company, Anderson, Clayton.

A five cent across the board wage increase, check-off, vacation with pay and other improvements in the contract were won for the workers. This was a major victory in view of the fact that the company made known it was out to used all kinds of red-baiting tactics by letters to the workers and through use of newspapers to publicize our union as being "communist dominated."

The workers knew that falling for redbaiting certainly doesn't pay off in wages and conditions. They would not let the company confuse them on the main issues and maintained a solid picket line 24 hours a day.

When the bosses realized that red baiting did not take effect they finally made up their minds to sit down and negotiate; and with the assistance of President Donald Henderson and Organizational Director Tisa negotiations terminated in a settlement on March 29th.

Commenting on the courageous fight Henderson said: "It is a smashing victory for Local 75 and the entire membership of FTA for these workers to take on a powerful company like Anderson, Clayton and force it to negotiate in good faith."

Full support was given by the Progressive Party in Houston plus a Citizens Committee that served the workers hot lunches, sandwiches and coffee day and night throughout the strike.

15 Gives Merit Award

By JOHN CUMMINGS

Local 15 reports that the executive board has recommended that Sister Irene Reid receive the Merit Award presented to the local by the national convention. Sister Reid is an active shop steward on the fourth floor and a member of the executive board.

Sister Rosa Kinsey, counter examiner, fourth floor, is back at work, other cases have likewise been satisfactorily settled, some however still remain open. The grievance committee of the ATC plant, chaired by Brother Graham and composed of Sister Lilly Martin, Louise Simmons, Nan Carter, and your reporter, John Cummings, is on its toes as the settlement of grievances proves. The union is in a healthier position now than at any time in its history.

I. M. Pearlstine, wholesale grocers under contract with our local has an active grievance committee consisting of Chairman James Brown, Ellison Nowlin, Chris Taylor, Graham Atkins and Peter Dingle. The cases handled by this committee have all been successfully settled. Brother Scott is back on his job and Brother Myles Johnson, whom the committee twice kept from being discharged, and whom the company accused of stealing, has been proved completely honest and is back at his job. The grievance committee put the company over the ropes and made them acknowledge their mistake. Because of actions like these 41 out of 43 eligible workers are members of the union and 35 attend meetings.

What makes Local 15 click? It is the fighting membership and the wide-awake stewards and grievance committees.

Local 5 Elects

Local 5, Seattle, Wash., has held a special meeting at which the following officers were elected:

James Moellendorf, president and business agent; Norman Kopf, vice-president and Florence Palmer, secretary-treasurer.

The following were elected to the Executive Board: Ivan Jacobsen; Aileen Mercer; Robert Mabe; Dottie Morgan; Lottie Zogrofos Robert Brauch and Johan James. The last two were also elected trustees.

ARTHUR GAETH—ABC
Let the People Speak
Sponsored by [illegible]
EVERY MONDAY NIGHT

Here's the lineup of delegates to the FTA Local 78 conference held in Los Angeles, Calif. Standing from left: FTA Representative Mike Shapiro; Sacramento-Santa Clara-San Joaquin Division Secy. Ralph Hargrove; Salt River Valley Div. Secy. Ken Bowen; Jack Plummer, SRV; Acting Pres. James Patton, Imperial Valley; SRV Pres. Dick Turner; Regional Director Jack Montgomery; Duke Cunningham, Pres. Executive Council 78; Carrie Hawkins, SSS; General Office Manager Frances Decker, 78; Dave Forbes, Salinas-Watsonville-Hollister Committee; Harry Rasmussen, SSS and John Dodson, President, SSS. Seated: Bonnie Towers, SSS; Edna Cooney, SWH Secy.; Nona Joyce, Secy. Executive Council, 78; FTA Pres. Donald Henderson; Ann Ellis, SWH; FTA Organizing Director John Tisa and Elizabeth Carr, SSS.

78 PARLEY MAPS PLANS TO BUILD FTA, ORGANIZE

Plans to build FTA and to organize the unorganized sheds were mapped at the recent conference of delegates from the four divisions of Local 78, fresh fruit and vegetable packing workers of California and Arizona.

Two main concentration points were picked for the organizing work, Fresno and Brentwood, Calif., where there are several sheds not under contract to the union. Some were previously under FTA contract and were allowed to slip during the splitting regime of Holman Day and others have yet to be placed under contract.

The same weekend saw a meeting of southern California locals of FTA, including Local 64, San Diego, Local 25, Los Angeles and the Imperial Valley and Salt River Valley divisions of 78. This meeting went on record urging that an FTA school be held in southern California early in May and endorsed the FTA convention policies on wage increases and other issues.

The 78 parley was attended by the following: Salinas-Watsonville-Hollis area: Duke Cunningham, Edna Cooney, Ann Ellis. Salt River Valley: Dick Turner, Ken Bowen, Jack Plummer. San Joaquin-Santa Clara-Sacramento: John Dodson, Ralph Hargrove, Elizabeth Carr. Imperial Valley: Jas. Patton, Lewis Joyce, Nona Joyce.

FTA President Donald Henderson and Organizing Director John Tisa attended and spoke at both sessions.

Win Union Shop in Packing Contracts

FTA Local 78 has won a union shop contract from the grower-shippers in the fruit and vegetable packinghouses of Arizona and California.

The union shop was won by by-passing the Taft-Hartley law, which normally calls for an elaborate redtape process of petitions and elections before it can even be asked of an employer.

The victory demonstrates that FTA's policy of refusing to have anything to do with Taft-Hartley affidavits and other tanglefoot pays off.

It came with a slight assist from the Natl. Labor Relations Board, which denied an election in the Salt River alley, Arizona sheds on the ground that the workers were "agricultural." This decision helped make a "memorandum of understanding" between the grower-shipper and the union binding.

The memorandum says in part: "The following union shop provision shall be effective without an election if and to the extent permited by law" and then goes on to spell out the agreement. New workers are to become members within 14 days, cannot be discriminated against in their application by the union and in the event of refusal to join shall be discharged.

Other provisions of the contract provide rate increases for for premium pay, minimum two hours call-in pay and time and half for overtime after eight hours in any one day.

The present voluntary system whereby shed workers receive unemployment compensation though technically not entitled to it under state law continues. The state legislature of California recently removed shed workers from unemployment benefits.

Local 37 Elects

Newly elected officers of Local 37, Newcastle, Ind., are: Harry Cashdollar, president; James White, vice-president; Harold Funderberg, secretary-treasurer; Charles Walker, inside steward and Marshall Collier, outside steward.

195 Wins Gains

Despite an earlier notice that the company would refuse to bargain and in the face of the CIO regional office sniffing around for a possible raid, FTA Local 195 won considerable gains in the renewal of its contract with the Hopkinsville Milling Co., Hopkinsville, Ky.

Gains include contract extention to April, 1950, with a wage reopener this fall, irrevocable checkoff, six paid holidays in place of five, double time for holidays worked instead of time and a half, a clause guaranteeing equitable distribution of overtime and other benefits.

Negotiating committee was Cordie Wills, Clinton Mayberry, Edward Moseley, Silvy Brewer and Charlie Majors, helped by FTA Representative James Barnett.

Acme-Evans Wins 5c

Members of Local 84, Acme-Evans Milling Co., Indianapolis, had to take time out to give the heave-ho to a Teamster agent who was trying to build up a raid before they could go on negotiating their new contract.

After they got rid of Dave Beck's goon, they settled with the company for a five cent straight across the board raise, making the top $1.19 and the bottom 96 cents. Union shop was continued.

95 Asks Job Parley

Alarmed by the increase in unemployment in Monmouth Co., N. J., FTA Local 95 has issued a call for a conference by local CIO and AFL unions.

Pointing to nearly 12,000 workers on unemployment rolls at the end of February, the local said: "We must act to prevent employers from using a vast army of unemployed to smash unions." The call was sent to close to a dozen unions in the area, and is receiving a good response.

Michigan Locals Merge

Merger of FTA locals in Michigan was announced at the end of a conference March 19 in Bay City, and was followed by congratulations from President Donald Henderson and Secretary-Treasurer Armando Valdes.

"Constructive and practical steps have been taken to consolidate the small Michigan locals into one strong, united amalgamated local which will be much more adequate to meet the needs of these trying times," the two officers said.

"We firmly believe this step will be welcomed by the entire Michigan membership. A forerunner of this can be seen in the new contract negotiated between the Ellsworth-East Jordan Division, formerly Local 74, and the Reid-Murdoch Co. just recently, where in the face of actual wage cuts and misleading propaganda on the cost of living, our members were able to increase wages this year by five cents an hour."

Buckeye Oil Council Meets

Delegates from six Buckeye cotton oil plants met at a recent FTA Council conference in Memphis, Tenn., to talk problems of the workers both organized and unorganized.

The two biggest problems dealt with center around the increasing speedup and difficulties in getting grievances settled, according to Regional Director Larry Larsen.

It was decided to issue a monthly bulletin to all plants, to exchange regular information among the locals, and to aim at involving all cotton oil workers in the South.

A meeting of all cotton oil workers was set for next October, where emphasis will be put on organizing not only oil workers but also the agricultural workers.

This was decided upon "because the Council feels that the agricultural workers must be organized and a minimum program worked out so that workers from farm and field will not be used as potential scabs if oil workers should have to strike."

New officers elected are: George Isabel, Local 19, chairman; Dennis Rollins, 180, and W. B. Journigan, 102, vice-chairman; Calvin Edwards secretary-treasurer.

Quaker Oats 'Points With Pride'

Members of the Quaker Oats Local 110, Cedar Rapids, Ia., united in the Quaker Oats Council, do a little pointing with pride in a recent issue of Local 110's Newsletter.

Writes the Newsletter: "Time certainly flies. It was just eight years ago in March, 1941, that Local 110 was formed. After just a few days of secret publicity a meeting was held. . . .

"It was no easy struggle. . . . On September, 1941, a contract was signed. That started a new era in the plant and from then on conditions started to improve steadily."

The Newsletter then tells how the Council was formed to meet the company with the united strength of all Quaker locals, and how it has worked out to everyone's benefit.

"On our eighth anniversary we can look back and point with pride to our accomplishments," the writer concludes. **"Let's make the next eight years as good or better than the last eight."**

Campbells Swipes Vacation Pay

Campbells Soup—biggest cannery in the world—is not above cheating its workers out of earned vacation pay, Local 80 reports from Camden, N. J.

This is how it's being done. Recently Campbells laid off thousands of workers, and only now has begun to hire back a thin trickle of men and women. By waiting until the workers were out more than 60 days and their seniority rights expired before rehiring them, the company has "saved thousands of dollars that rightly belongs to these workers."

The company even let its boasted efficiency go down the drain in the maintenance and press room departments, the local reports, because workers were needed long before they were taken back.

The local criticizes itself, saying: "We must admit that we have been lax in not correcting the 60-day layoff clause, thereby letting down our members who were laid off. . . . We are resolved that this clause will be corrected in the renewal of our contract."

80 Fights for 'Trenton 6'

Local 80, Camden, N. J., took up the fight for civil rights on two fronts this month. The local sent a delegation to Governor Driscoll to ask release of the six Negro workers condemned to death for a murder they did not commit and in the same week urged the Governor to veto a state "subversive" bill.

Although the six Negro workers have sworn alibis, some from their employers, they are in the state death house at the instance of a fanatically anti-Negro and anti-union state prosecutor. The case has had nationwide attention, and has won support from European workers.

Despite protests from 80 and thousands of other Jersey groups and citizens, Driscoll has signed the bill, following the fascist pattern set in many other states.

Urge Jobless Pay in California

Rank and filers from FTA canneries in California have been visiting their state legislators to demand an end to discriminations against seasonal workers on unemployment compensation.

Four bills are now in the hopper to correct this evil, and the delegates were pressing for early passage. Some reports from individual legislators were encouraging. Two of them, Assemblymen Robert Condon and Francis Dunn, said they would work for passage of the bills.

78 in Political Action, Organizing

By Edna Lapp & Bessie Walters

Local 78, SWH Division, has been making progress both in organizing and tightening up the union structure and in political action.

The Watsonville branch of the division has been taking part in the municipal election campaign, trying to get a new set of officials in place of the old ones. Members have also been writing letters to the state capital protesting against so-called "loyalty" bills sponsored by State Sen. Jack Tenney, head of the California Un-American committee.

After successfully meeting head-on the redbaiting attack of the Teamsters in the raid last summer, the whole local is buckling down to work in a democratic style.

A democratically elected negotiating committee won renewal of the contract with the Grower-Shippers Assn., bringing a raise and a union shop clause.

Many delegates from the rank-and-file committee attended the FTA convention in Santa Cruz, Calif., and a large number attended the recent conference of Local 78 in Los Angeles.

Other 78 committees include one on legislation, which is very active, and a social committee working hard to help bring the members together.

The local is offering a radio and television set, proceeds to be used for political action and organizing.

LONGSHORE MEMBERS FOR AUTONOMY IN LANDSLIDE VOTE

In a landslide vote of almost all the delegates, members of the Intl. Longshoremens and Warehousemens Union backed their officers' stand on union autonomy within the CIO at their San Francisco convention this month.

The vote came on a section of the report upholding the right of the union to follow policies as directed by the rank and file and not as ordered by groups outside the ILWU.

ILWU President Harry Bridges made the principal pitch on the autonomy issue, pointing out at the same time that the union firmly intended to stay within the CIO. This point was in answer to phony newspaper stories that the union had been invited or planned "to take a walk."

The convention emphasized the members' wage demands, declaring its determination "to fight for wage increases to the limit of our bargaining power."

The union also reaffirmed its policy of opposition to the "cold war," demanded outright repeal of Taft-Hartley and vigorously defended its refusal to knuckle under to Taft-Hartley affidavits and other red-tape traps.

In this connection, the convention pointed to recent successes in bargaining as proof of the correctness of its policy. Greetings were sent to the convention by FTA President Henderson.

* * *

Estimated total corporation profits before taxes for 1948 were over 400% above those in the prewar year 1939.

And this is the kind of "housing" that asparagus workers struck against in the fields around Stockton, Calif. It is called a "family type" house, and has no toilet, no water. The leaning effect in the picture is not the fault of the photographer. The house just naturally leans that way.

Charles Brown, member of Local 7 who was on strike in the California asparagus fields, says: "We have to live in such terrible houses when we come home from the fields. When it rains, they leak. Toilets are unbearable and you have to take a bath in a washtub outside. In the morning you have to stand in line to wash your face. These shacks have been there for years and nothing is done about them despite the promises."

Pompilio Pedrero, member of the Steering Committee of FTA Local 7 in the strike against feudal conditions in the California asparagus fields, says: "Since I joined FTA Local 7 in the strike against the growers and the bankers, I feel very strongly that we need organization badly to put an end to the feudalism in California agriculture. The principles of FTA are the principles of thousands of exploited Mexican workers here."

"I am just one of the 6,000 workers exploited by the growers and the Associated Farmers for 20 years," says Picket Captain Fernando Carrido. "I am a member of FTA Local 7 for 10 years and I know the benefits of belonging to a real fighting union. Thousands like me are ready to fight the Associated Farmers any time, any place. We know that FTA will sooner or later win out over these banker-farmers and we'll see our first contract."

Asparagus Workers Win Solid Gains From First Agreement

Winning their first signed agreement after a full season on strike last year and elaborate preparations for carrying it on through this season, FTA Local 7 marked up solid gains for the workers in the asparagus fields of northern California this month.

The local has also won substantial gains in many individual camps as the result of the unity and militancy of the strikers in both seasons.

One of the main issues of the strike was the so-called "holdback" system by which a large percentage of the worker's pay was withheld until the end of the season by the grower. This was used as a weapon to force workers to stay on the job throughout the season, regardless of conditions, and was also used to cheat workers who were injured or became ill of their earnings.

Under the agreement, the holdback system is modified to the extent that earnings cannot be withheld for sickness or injury.

At the same time, many of the camps have dropped the system altogether, indicating that the strike last year and the preparations this season paid off.

On wages, the agreement provides that any dispute or dissatisfaction will be arbitrated by a board of five. Two are selected by Local 7, two by the growers and a fifth mutually agreed upon as impartial.

Here again many individual growers have recognized the strength of the union by giving substantial increases in their camps.

The agreement outlaws any form of job discrimination on grounds of race, creed, national origin, color, religious or political belief and affiliation. This section removes another of the main grievances of the workers, many of whom are of Filipino and Latin-American origin. Discrimination against workers for union membership or activity — another main issue in the strike — is thus forbidden.

Housing, which has been among the worst in an extremely poorly housed section of agriculture, is being improved on most of the camps, again by action of the individual growers.

The strike last year won widespread support from union members in California and throughout the nation. Workers realized that sweatshop conditions in the fields threatened their own hard-won conditions in the plants, and flocked to help the local.

The unity and militancy of the field workers brought the victory in the agreement. Growers last year, backed by the notorious Associated Farmers and by the big banks, did everything in their power to break the strike. As a result, a $15,000,000 crop was allowed to go to waste and the strike continued.

Grower-organized scabbing was unsuccessful. Mexican and other workers brought in for the purpose of breaking the strike broke the growers' spirit instead by joining the union as soon as the issues were explained to them.

Back of the asparagus growers, of course, were much bigger interests who fear organization of the field workers in California's billion dollar agricultural industries.

These workers, paid sweatshop wages and worked under feudal conditions, are the source of much of the super-profits raked in by the big commercial farms of the state.

Now that the members of FTA Local 7 have shown that it can be done, other field workers will turn to FTA as their hope against exploitation.

The victory was won, too, despite the presence of the Taft-Hartley law still on the books and despite threats of police intimidation against the workers.

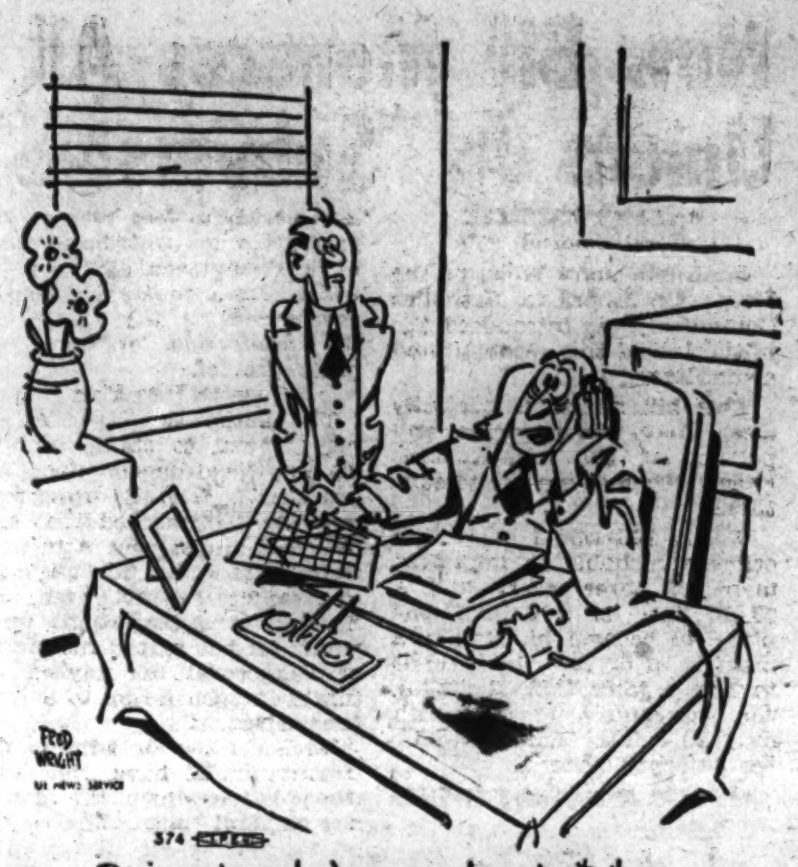
Social Security Practical for All Food and Farm Workers

Through a barrage of unfriendly questions, Social Security Commissioner Arthur J. Altmeyer presented his plan to include 4.8 million agricultural workers and food processors under the federal system of social security and old age insurance.

The administration plan calls for the use of stamp books by each employe of small farms and each domestic servant employed in a household.

"When the employer meets his payroll," Altmeyer explained, "he would paste stamps in each book indicating the contribution of himself and the employe. In rural areas the employer could purchase the stamps from the mail carrier and in city areas from the post office. A stamp plan could be used also by small industrial and commercial establishments which found it more convenient."

Altmeyer said that at present there are 4.1 million hired workers on farms and about three million domestic workers in American households. In addition there are more than 700,000 food processing workers who are excluded.



Business is so bad we may have to start laying off my relatives...

FTA Demands End to Freezeout Of Workers in New Wage Law

An end to the freeze-out of seasonal and agricultural workers was demanded by FTA in testimony on proposed changes in the Wage-Hour act.

The demand was raised on two counts: 1) seasonal workers are discriminated against by the law in allowing employers to work them long hours without paying premium rates; and 2) millions of agricultural workers — most of whom work on big commercial farms — are excluded entirely.

"FTA is not concerned with these exemptions and exclusions in the law as dry technical provisions expanding or limiting coverage of a Federal statute," the FTA statement said.

"These exemptions mean dollars and cents to our members and more particularly to the unorganized workers. The difference between an expansion or an elimination of exemptions is the difference between having a wage-hour law or no wage-hour law at all, as far as these workers are concerned."

On the question of agricultural workers, the FTA statement said the union was not asking for inclusion of the "traditional 'hired hand' employed by the small family farmer," but for those on the "large scale commercial enterprise farms," employing 300 or more man days of hired labor per year.

These workers "are treated today as second class citizens. They are the twice forgotten men—and women, and children —of our age. They are the parias of our social legislation."

The testimony also demolished claims of the special interest groups that work on food and other seasonal processes must be exempt from the overtime pay requirements of the law.

"The philosophy behind the employers' arguments is that the workers rather than the employers should bear the whole burden of conditions peculiar to certain industries.

"We maintain 1) that workers who put in overtime hours are entitled to standard pay, 2) that overtime rates are being paid and have been paid for years by a great majority of exempt employers with which FTA and other unions have contract, and 3) that the profits of these exempt industries are sufficient to allow them to meet the same costs other industries bear, and that 4) it is high time Congress stopped giving these industries special treatment."

Both sections of the FTA statement pointed out that the workers in the food, tobacco and fiber processing industries, including agricultural workers, "are the most bitterly exploited people in the U. S."

Figures were cited showing that the great majority of the nation's two and a half million agricultural workers are employed on a small percentage of big farms, while the 52 percent of the nation's farms operated by small growers employ no agricultural labor at all according to U. S. government figures.

On exemptions, the statement pointed out that the law now allows employers in cottonseed oil, cotton compress, cotton ginning, dairy products and sugar processing firms to pay no overtime whatever to their workers.

Canning and fresh fruit and vegetable packing firms are privileged to work their employes over 40 hours without overtime pay for 28 weeks a year, while certain other firms need pay no overtime during a 14 week period.

"The total comes to well over one million industrial workers who are excluded in one degree or another from the national policy establishing a minimum wage and overtime payment after 40 hours of work," the union said.

Including agricultural workers on big farms under the law would help, not harm, the small farmer, the FTA statement pointed out.

"In order to live, they have to compete with the big operators. They have very little capital. They are forced to compete, therefore, by their own personal labor.

"The big operator, with his large capital and ability to employ large numbers of workers paid at sweatshop wages can, of course, produce much more cheaply. Using this advantage gained by the ability to exploit sweated labor, he can and does undersell the small operator and drive him off the land."

Reminding the Congressmen of the bloody strikes in agriculture during the 30's, the FTA warned that we could see repetition if this Congress failed to correct the injustices in the present wage-hour law.

"We can either go on excluding these workers from the protection of the wage-hour law, piling up deprivation and resentment until we have another explosion, or we can take the elementary step of including these men and women under the minimum wage, overtime and other protections of the act."

FDR—His Words Live on

April 12, 1945, Franklin D. Roosevelt died just at the dawn of victory over fascism and imperialism in World War II.

His 12 years as President saw many important gains made by the common people. Since FDR died, the enemies of the people have tried without ceasing to rob us of those gains and to plunge the world into a new and supremely terrible war.

It is well to remember some of the things that Roosevelt said to us. Here are a few, quoted from his speeches:

ON LABOR . . .

A free labor system is the very foundation of a functioning democracy. We know that one of the first acts of the Axis dictatorships has been to wipe out all the principles and standards which labor has been able to establish for its own preservation and advancement—**Sept. 1, 1941.**

ON WAR . . .

I have seen war. I have seen war on land and sea. I have seen blood running from the wounded. . . . I have seen the agony of wives and mothers. I hate war. . . . I wish I could keep war from all nations; but that is beyond my power. I can at least make certain that no act of the U. S. helps to produce or to promote war—**Aug. 14, 1936.**

ON BUYING POWER . . .

In the last analysis, consumer buying power is the milk in the cocoanut of all business. Whether you own a big department store, or do business in a small way on Main St., your sales are dependent on how much money the average family in the community is earning—**May 2, 1949.**

ON FASCISM . . .

We shall not be able to claim that we have gained total victory in this war if any vestige of fascism in any of its malignant forms is permitted to survive anywhere in the world—**Sept. 17, 1943.**

186 FIGHTS GAG BILLS

Local 186, Philadelphia, played a prominent part in helping block a thought control bill in the Pennsylvania legislature.

Eight delegates were sent to the capital to protest the proposed bill, which would set up a state "unAmerican" committee with full power to prosecute anyone for thoughts or ideas the committee didn't like.

As a result of the protest march, the bill was hurriedly dropped. Pennsylvania workers are keeping watch lest it be slipped over in the last hours of the session.

Local 186 delegates were: James Otto, Robert Jones, Melissa Lester, Edna Warfield, Wm. Collins, Elizabeth Miller, Mary Duggins and Sister McBride.

Local 48 Wins New Gains

A score of all gains and no losses was marked up by Local 48, Summitville, Ind., in renewing its contract with the Kraft Cheese Co.

Double time in place of time and a half was won for six holidays; plantwide seniority instead of departmental; a five cent raise for head cheesemaker and retention of the 48-hour guaranteed work week were won. Checkoff was kept.

Teamster Goon to Trial

Gus Dorazio, employed by the AFL Teamsters Union in a raid on CIO brewery workers in Philadelphia, has been ordered to the Grand Jury in the death of Brewery Union member Al Blomeyer. Blomeyer was kicked to death in an argument.

Ralston Agreement

FTA workers at the Ralston-Purina Co. will get increases up to eight cents, Asst. Regional Director Moranda Smith reports from Charlotte, N. C.

THE SPEED-UP

By JOSEPH CALIFF

Director, Research & Education

When the bosses get together these days, what do they talk about? Nine chances out of ten, they swap ideas on how to speed up their workers.

For instance, the Grocery Manufacturers of America, Inc., a bosses' union to which all the big food companies belong, spent two meetings on this subject at its convention last November.

The leader in this campaign is the National Association of Manufacturers. The NAM is holding schools in different parts of the country to teach the art of how to sweat more production out of workers.

Army Helps

At the most recent NAM school in Belleaire, Florida several weeks ago, 200 bosses spent five days studying methods of "Increasing man-hour productivity," a polite term for speed-up. The U. S. Government joined in by sending one of its top army personnel experts to contribute the latest military ideas on the subject.

It is no accident, therefore, that speed-up is the order of the day. An all-out drive is under way in all industries to cut down on wage costs.

The bosses are using various methods in their speed-up drive. American business has spent $50 billion since the end of the war to build new plants and buy modern labor-saving equipment and machinery. With these new plants and machines, more production is turned out at a faster rate, with fewer workers.

Double Die

A good example is the cigar industry. Cigar factories are installing new double-die cigar-making machines as fast as they can get them. These machines make one-third more cigars than the old style machines, with the same number of workers.

Companies are also speeding up production lines and machines, adding to work loads, and retiming piecework jobs to increase the amount of output required for the same rate of pay. More and more companies are turning to incentive systems, which tie the worker's pay to how much he produces.

Taking a tip from today's witch-hunters, even red-baiting is being used to help put over the speed-up. The New York **Journal of Commerce** (3/9/49) reports that in plugging for incentive systems, a management efficiency expert declared recently:

"The move to eliminate incentives stems from Russia. It is part of the campaign to eliminate our system of free enterprise."

So, if you object to being slavedriven and say so, you're liable to be called "unAmerican."

Speed-up means bigger profits for the bosses. For workers it means pay cuts, increased strain and danger to health, rising accident rates, and loss of jobs.

With the speed-up campaign getting hotter all the time, unions must be on the ball to prevent any cutting of work standards and wage rates.

Guest speaker Bjorne Halling, secretary-treasurer of the California CIO Council, speaks to the delegates at the 7th FTA national convention held in Santa Cruz, Calif., last February. Looking on at speakers' table is FTA Vice-Pres. Armando Ramirez.

South 'No. 1' for Unions, FTA Delegates Declare

The South still remains the "number one problem for the American trade union movement," the delegates to the 7th FTA convention said in a resolution calling for intensified union drives to organize southern workers.

"The concentration of U. S. monoply, landlordism, exploitation, low wages and bad conditions have kept the southern labor movement backward," the resolution added in pointing to the thousands of southern workers in FTA's jurisdiction.

These conditions also produce the reactionary congressmen and state legislators who act as a brake on progress through the nation, the delegates explained.

The resolution called on FTA to continue its work in the South, declaring: "It is of the utmost importance that FTA establish close relationship with the national CIO southern organising drive to the mutual benefit of the workers of the South and our union."

The delegates unanimously approved a three point program:

"1. That FTA's drive to reorganize and rebuild Local 22 at the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. in Winston-Salem, N. C., be continued.

"2. That the needs of the sharecroppers be further examined and that they be encouraged to organize to improve their conditions.

"3. That the cotton oil and compress industry councils of FTA be encouraged to raise finances and establish educational programs to further increase organization, to build FTA and ensure improved conditions of the organized plants in those industries."

Urge B'gger Role for Women in FTA

Pointing out that "at least half of the members of FTA are women," the 7th FTA convention asked both local unions and the national officers to follow "the spirit and the letter" of sections of the FTA constitution which call for equal treatment of women workers.

"This has not always been carried out in our contracts, with the result that women workers are discriminated against," the resolution said.

"At the same time we do not find women sufficiently represented in our union leadership, since we have only one woman member on the international executive board and no women among the national officers.

"Therefore we urge all locals to follow the spirit and the letter of the constitution in regard to women workers and we urge that women be more fully represented in the leadership of our locals and of the international union."

Act on Philippines, Alaska Unions

Two resolutions passed by the FTA 7th National Convention in February demonstrate the international character of FTA workers' interests.

One dealt with the question of Philippine independence, the other with the need for united action by all unions in Alaska.

The Philippine resolution, submitted by members of Local 7, pointed out that the Bell-Tydings act, which seemingly gave the Philippines their independence, actually tied the islands' economy hand and foot to "the economic interests of a few powerful corporations in this country."

This was done, the resolution said, by planting 23 U. S. military bases on the islands, by forbidding the republic to sign treaties of its own free will, by devaluating the peso in terms of the U.S. dollar and by sharply restricting Philippine emigration to the U.S.

It called for full support to the bill by Sen. Glenn H. Taylor which would repeal the Bell-Tydings law.

The resolution on Alaska unions called on the CIO Longshoremen, the Intl. Machinists, and the CIO Fishermen "to unite with FTA and its locals in the Alaska operation in a program of joint demands on major issues."

This action, the resolution said, would correct conditions in Alaska resulting from low wages, poor seasonal earnings, inadequate overtime and other discrimination against both resident and non-resident workers.

Cultural Notes

Everybody knows that our kind employers give away billions every year just in wages but did you know that they also spend millions for cuture and uplift?

Take American Tobacco, for instance. They're throwing $10,000 a shot into their television show, and that's just for talent, not for network time.

Or Libby, NcNeill & Libby —they're starting their sixth year as sponsors of a radio soap opera called "My True Story," based on the magazine of the same name. It's a sad story, too—like their labor relations.

Then there's R. J. Reynolds, with five nights a week television, five nights a week radio, Lord knows how much more on famous athletes who do it all on Camels.

And people say big business doesn't care about art!

New Bill Menaces All Unions As 'Subversive'

By LEE PRESSMAN
General Counsel, FTA

Chairman John Wood of the House Un-American Activities Committee, has introduced the initial bill of this reconstituted committee.

This bill makes it perfectly clear that the purposes and policies of the Dies-Rankin-Parnell Thomas era are to continue.

Wood's bill would make it a crime punishable by imprisonment of three years and a $3,000 fine, for a federal employe to become or remain a member of or contribute funds to any organization, including the Communist Party, which may be called "subversive" by the Attornty General.

It would make it a crime for any worker to join such an organization or contribute funds to it if employed in any plant which has a contract with the government or any agency for the production of arms, or parts thereof.

Up to One Man

The authority of the Attorney-General to stamp organizations would depend upon the president's "loyalty order." It must be remembered that under this order, the Attorney-General is under no obligation to give, and has not given, any hearing to organizations upon which he has placed his stamp of disapproval, nor any opportunity in open forum to defend themselves.

No legislative or administrative standards have ever been provided on which the Attorney-General may impose his official stamp of disapproval. The executive order under which he acts does not confine him to the listing of organizations which advocate the overthrow of government through force or violence.

It may not be a long step for the Attorney-General to determine that labor unions which seek wage increases and improvement of working conditions through a militant and fighting program, should be branded as subversive because theoretically such policies may "interfere" or "hamper" the program and policies of the Attorney-General and his associates.

Raiders Saved by the Bell

Only the bell, rung by a Taft-Hartley NLRB man, saved officials of the CIO Transport Service Union from a sad embarrassment at a hearing on the Piedmont leafhouse case in Winston-Salem, N. C.

Officials of the CIO union, now raiding FTA Local 22 in the leafhouses and at Reynolds, were tongue-tied at FTA questions when the NLRB agent cut the whole discussion off short and adjourned the meeting.

FTA counsel Harold Cammer was asking the CIO raider what workers his union was chartered to organize — "tobacco workers, textile workers, railroad workers, or what," and the CIO man was floundering around for an answer when the hearing was cut short.

Transport officials promised Piedmont leaf workers an election months ago. They haven't got it yet, and meantime they've lost paid vacations and other benefits held under FTA contract. Other leaf workers have kept their contracts and are continuing to negotiate grievances.

Profits Tops

Overall tobacco profits are well up with the rest of industry's take for 1948, according to figures just released by the National City Bank of New York.

According to the Bank—which has no motive for exaggerating — the tobacco trust increased its swag by 22.1 percent in 1948 over 1947. 1947, it will be remembered, also saw an alltime high for profits.

The national average increase was 22 percent, with a total of 11.7 billion in 1948. **This is after taxes.**

Field Worker Aid

A seven point program of economic and legal help to agricultural workers was outlined by the 7th National FTA Convention held in Santa Cruz, Calif., this February. The program called for aid to agricultural workers on all but the family size farm employing the "traditional 'hired hand.'" The points included:

1. Minimum wage and overtime protection under the Wage-Hour Act "for agricultural workers employed in large scale commercial farming enterprises."

2. Social security and unemployment help to all agricultural workers. 3. A U. S. employment service "free from big grower domination." 4. U. S. loans and grants "to sharecroppers so they may become self-sustaining farmers."

5. Adequate housing and transportation to and from the job.

6. Laws to "protect agricultural labor in the right to organize and bargain collectively" and 7. An end to the "importation of agricultural workers from outside."

LOCALS ASK PENSION CHANGES

Four main changes in the American Tobacco Co. proposed pension plan are asked by locals of the American Tobacco Council in a letter to the company this week.

One of the main demands is a precise definition of the words "willful misconduct" in the proposal, under which the company Board of Directors can arbitrarily deprive a worker of all pension rights.

Another is for protection against layoffs depriving a worker of his pension. The proposed plan at present has no such protection. The plan also lacks any provision for laying aside a fund to meet pension costs, the company's proposal being to pay out of current income. This, FTA has pointed out, makes the plan unstable and insecure.

The present plan sets the maximum number of years work on which pensions will be paid at 25. FTA is asking that pensions be paid on the full amount, to protect workers with more than 25 years service.

Finally, the unions point out that the proposed plan would deduct the amount of social security benefits received. Thus a worker entitled on the face of the plan to a $1,000 pension after 25 years would actually receive only $762.50, or 38 percent of his earnings instead of the 50 percent nominally set in the plan.

Meetings with the company on the plan were under way as FTA News went to press.

This picture was incorrectly captioned in the February-March issue of FTA News. Caption should have said: This is the committee that led Local 647 to victory in the strike at the De Nobili Cigar Co. in New York. From left, seated: Asst. Regional Director Severino Martinez; Local Rec. Secy. Benvenuto De Cicco; President Rosario Alessi; Fin. Secy. Ferdinando Lipari. Standing: Treasurer Egidio Calabreta; Trustees Spiridione Strignano; Vice-President Felipo Saitta; Delegate Pasquale Fruda and Trustee Emanuel Raisa.

Frankie & Johnnie —FTA Style

(This song was written—and is sung with guitar—by Kenneth Bowen, secretary of the Salt River Valley Division of FTA Local 78. It goes to the tune of "Frankie & Johnnie").

Frankie and Johnnie were people—
People just like you and I
But they found out the hard way
That wages you can't buy.
They had no plan, no union plan.

Now Frankie went up to the shipper,
Saying "something has got to be done
I can't ever get decent wages
So long as I am just one."
She had a plan, a union plan.

Now Frankie told all of the people,
With tales, wails and cries,
"There's just one thing for us to do
And that's to organize.
We'll make it pay with FTA."

Now Frankie and Johnnie were wise
To all the big phonies' bait.
They told all the people
To join up with seventy-eight,
And make a go with CIO.

Now the phonies they had to do
Like a bee who's lost his stinger
So they put out a big white sheet,
Signed with a pointing finger
A dirty man, with a dirty plan.

But Frankie and Johnnie just laughed
At this old disruptive plan.
For the people had seen right through it
It was the shippers' hand.
Printed so plain, with a name.

So don't lose sight, good people,
The issues are at hand.
We must have our union
Or eat from the shippers' hand.
A dirty hand, with a dirty plan.

Now this song has no ending,
This song can never be stopped.
For as long as there's hungry people
They'll cry out for union shop.
And make it pay, with FTA.

American Tobacco Profit Hits All Time High in '48

With profits 119.9 percent above 1939 and the biggest sales in history, American Tobacco had its fattest year of all in 1948 — while real wages of the workers fell and layoffs increased all over the nation.

The top bosses in American Tobacco did all right for themselves too, voting to give each other a total salary and bonus grab of $2,109,351.16 in 1948.

Eighteen top American executives split this dainty little melon, each one averaging out $117,186.18 per year. Figured on a 40 hour week (if the bosses put in that much), that's an average of $56.44 per hour.

"Incentive" for the Bosses

The bonus racket got too raw for a few of the stockholders, some of whom have begun to squawk in recent years. One actually proposed that the president and vice-presidents be limited to $200,000 and $150,000 a year each, but this was brushed aside on the ground that it would not leave these men with any "incentives to increased effort and accomplishment for stockholders."

The big boys did kick back a little of their take, though, just to make sure the stockholders don't get too tough. This was what cut their "earnings" down to the averages mentioned above. Six of the biggest of the big shots were elected to make the sacrifice.

Stockholders were not doing badly, though — they pulled down a 33 percent increase in dividends during the year 1948. The increase in dividends since 1939 is nearly 50 percent.

In addition, many millions of dollars were set aside for "reserves," "deprecation" and the like. These reserves serve to conceal the true profit picture from the workers and the general public.

American Tobacco is now the leader of all the tobacco trusts throughout the world, having climbed ahead of the Imperial Tobacco Co. Limited of England, in terms of value of assets owned.

Francis Cardinal Spellman supervises strikebreaking operation against former Local 296 in New York. After this direct intervention, strikers were forced back to work on original terms twice rejected before. Offer was an eight percent increase. Final settlement raised it to eight and one-third percent.

FTL

Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and ...a—CIO

Vol. VIII—No. 4 APRIL, 1949 Price Five Cents

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Layoffs Climb as Congress Stalls on Taft Act Repeal

FTA Local 638, Lancaster, Pa., meets the situation caused by the increasing tide of layoffs. Workers are shown signing up for unemployment compensation after the entire stemmery department of the P. Lorillard Co. was laid off recently. Helping the clerk from the local Employment Office is Miriam Cliff, president and business manager of 638 and Sister Sarah Hanna from the plant.

Demand Action on $1.00 Pay Floor

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